

Rubicon Update

Questions and Answers concerning the Tahoe side of the Rubicon Trail

In late 2019 early 2020 multiple agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the Rubicon Trail. This is an exciting document as State Parks, El Dorado County, Placer County, Tahoe National Forest, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) and Eldorado National Forest all agree the Rubicon Trail is important, historic and the users should have a seamless experience when on the trail. All agencies are working together to achieve that goal.

In an effort to communicate changes for the Rubicon Trail, all agencies involved are happy and excited to provide the following information.

Questions for Rubicon moving forward

- Who is in charge? All agencies are working together to provide a seamless experience when on the Rubicon Trail.
- Who to contact with questions/concerns-To assist the user community all questions, issues and concerns can be directed to El Dorado County, Justin Williams at 530-621-5554 or Vickie Sanders, 530-621-7538. We will get the information to the right agency. We are working to minimize confusion and frustration for the user community.
- How will users see effects – They will see El Dorado County working on the Placer County side, they will also see the Tahoe NF and LTBMU working and patrolling on the trail more often. The same management objectives for experience and environmental protection should feel similar to users through both counties.

Funding

There are several grant opportunities for the Rubicon Trail. State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Division manages both state and federal grant programs.

Federal Grant Programs-Recreational Trail Program is managed by State Parks. Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit has an active grant for the staging area.

State OHV Grant-This program opens in January every year and applications are due in March. Currently El Dorado County is writing and administering grants for the whole trail for major projects. This provides efficiencies and collaboration across jurisdictional lines.

Grants in 2020

- Operations and Maintenance-this grant provides helicopter services to bring rock to areas of the trail that are difficult if not impossible to address without these services. This grant will provide for the stabilization of Cadillac Hill and will address areas on the whole trail as needed. Whereas El Dorado County can administer grants we cannot use El Dorado funds across the county line as match. So match for the Ground Operations Grant on the Placer County side has been funding in the following manner:
 - Rubicon Trail Foundation (RTF)-This is a non-profit organization for the Rubicon Trail. This organization has committed \$32,000 for the matching funds for the work on the Placer County side in 2020.
 - Volunteer hours-El Dorado County will be coordinating volunteer projects and hours which count as grant match. These hours are very valuable and much appreciated by all agencies.
- Tahoe National Forest also has funding in their Operations and Maintenance grant to install rolling dips (focus on Cadillac Hill and a short section on the LTBMU segment)
- Education and Safety-This grant provides for staff at the Loon Lake Kiosk, spill kits, the bandana program, WAG Bags. This will cover the whole trail this year.
- Restoration-As areas where multiple routes exist and come need to be blocked and restored, this grant will fund that project. There are areas around Buck Island that need to be blocked again and the area restored for example.
- Planning-The area at Miller Creek just past Barker Pass is a major area of concern. The hillside is sliding off and there will be no access if this narrow passage is lost. This planning grant will look at alternatives around this area. A request has been made to RTF for the matching funds for this grant. GPS coordinates are -120.2264 39.0343.

Maintenance Activities

- Major project for 2020-Stabilization and drainage of Cadillac Hill (includes above and below the technical section), hardening with rock, more drainage below the technical section (summer/fall 2020). AAT/partners help place rock.
- Tahoma staging area: expansion, paving, kiosks, map (LTBMU topic) Expansion is a future topic, El Dorado County is applying for a grant to do the planning, once received we would begin that project. Paving is planned for existing parking this fall, Kiosk and Map this spring
- Reroute around Miller Creek, where, when?-General location has been identified, but scope is still being developed. Analysis will hopefully begin summer 2020. Planning grant has been received as discussed in the funding section.
- Area between Miller Creek and county line (drain & harden)-Plans and NEPA be done at the same time as the reroute. This will be a public process and you will be hearing more about this project.
- Rolling dips: within LTBMU & below Observation- If you are interested in helping with this project please contact Justin or Vickie. We will be coordinating with the forest unit responsible for that area.

- Signage: mile markers, kiosk, trail markers, updating old signs (@ 03-04, along paved road)-Any recommendations for signage is welcome. Please let us know your recommendations or request and we will take it to the agency responsible.
- Toilets for Tahoe side?-This has not been discussed at this point. As you know pumping is the issue. As we coordinate projects this issue can be discussed further.
- Annually a list of project is posted to the El Dorado County website, www.edcgov.us. This list provides opportunities for users, groups, clubs individuals to volunteer and claim a project. In 2020, projects for the Placer County side of the trail have been added. To claim a project you can contact Justin Williams at 530.621.5554, justin.williams@edcgov.us or Vickie Sanders 530.621.7538, vickie.sanders@edcgov.us.
- Volunteer Projects and timeline-As identified on the project list, drainage beginning at the staging area needs to be addressed. Cleaning out drainages, rebuilding water bars and lead off ditches. Volunteers can claim a drainage feature of a segment and address a few. Any and all volunteers are welcome.
- Where and how to volunteer –If you are interested in claiming a project, please contact Justin or Vickie with El Dorado County. They will coordinate projects with the agencies and obtain any permission necessary. This would streamline and simplify volunteer coordination.
- What if a project needs to be done that is not on the list?-Please let us know if you identify a project that is not on the list. Just because it's not on the list does not mean it's not a valid project. We will evaluate the project and give permission once it is discussed with the agencies. This is being done to avoid frustration and confusion for the volunteer.
- What paperwork is required?-El Dorado County will manage the paperwork and provide the direction needed to document all work. All volunteer work can be used as match on the State Off-Highway Motor Vehicle grants and are very important to the agencies.
- What is training is needed?-El Dorado County will help with any training if needed and guidance throughout the project.

Other Issues

Parking issues: Whereas there is limited parking at the Tahoma Staging area, there is additional parking in areas like Tahoe City parking lots. When parking along the road way remember no resource damage. Do not drive on vegetation.

Snow berm/winter use-Please stay tuned to further discussion on this issue. Placer County is working diligently with users on this issue. There will be public meetings in the future. We will get the information out as soon as possible on these meetings. All meeting notices are posted on Facebook on The Rubicon Gazette page.

Permits for large, organized, paid runs through the Tahoe and LTBMU-TNF would take lead on events/outfitter guides that run through the entire Placer Co. section. LTBMU

(Quinn) has indicated that they would take the lead on events/OGs that utilize mostly from the Tahoma TH to Miller Lake area.

You can see the Rubicon Annual Report here <https://www.edcgov.us/Government/Rubicon>.